of raw jute supply from local jute traders and dwindling demand for jute goods in both domestic and export market; and

(b) if so, what steps Government propose to take in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) The scenario of the Jute Industry has turned out to be most favourable during the last two years. Both during 1997-98 and 1998-99 seasons, the raw jute supply position has been comfortable at reasonable prices. As a result jute industry has faced no problem to maximise production of jute goods to cope up with the huge demand. Under the price support operation, JCI procured a total quantity of 9.85 lakh bales (9.04% of total production) through its 165 purchase centres in 1997-98 and provided remunerative prices to the jute growers. In the current season (1998-99) JCI could purchase around 9000 qtls under price support operation. Thereafter, the price support operation by JCI was not called for as the prices of raw jute started ruling well above support level. Production of jute goods during 1997-98 (April/March) increased to an all time record to 16.78 lakh tonnes as against 14.00 lakh tonnes in 1996-97. Production during 1998-99 (April/Oct) also recorded a marginal increase to 9.37 lakh tonnes from 9.32 lakh tonnes during the same period of last year.

(b) Docs not arise.

Modernisation/Re-Structuring of NTC

2633. SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Financial Institutions have refused loans to the National Textiles Corporation for modernisation;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) what are the details of the plan modernisation and overall restrucring of NTC; and

(d) what is the outstanding debt of the Banks and Financial Institutions and running interest amount;

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) and (b) 8 out of 9 subsidiaries of NTC have been declared sick and are before Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction and have defaulted in payment of outstanding dues to Financial Institutions. As such the Financial Institutions are reluctant to increase their exposure in NTC subsidiaries.

(c) On the basis of a unit wise viability study done by NTC Government is considering a revised turn around plan for the viable subsidiaries of NTC alongwith the viable mills under them keeping in view the BIFR norm of the net worth of these mills turning positive within the prescribed period. The interest of the workers will be kept in view in the revival plan.

(d) The total debt outstanding and payable by NTC to banks and Financial Institutions (including interest) upto 31.3.98 was Rs. 508.62 crores. The annual interest liability is approximately Rs. 76 crores.

Growth Rate of Textile Production

2634. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the growth rate of textile production during 1997-98 till September, 1998 as compared to previous two years;

(b) the reasons for sharp decline in the growth rate;

(c) the targeted growth rate fixed and the anticipated achievement likely to be made during the current year; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by Government to step up the pace of textile production?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA): (a) Production of fabrics excluding hosiery, khadi, wool and silk sector during 1996-97 and 1997-98 was as follows:

1996-97 — 19352 million sq. mtrs.
1997-98 — 20951 million sq. mtrs.

The provisional figures for the period April to September 1998-99 was 10385 million sq. mtrs.

(b) There is no decline.

(c) The anticipated achievement during the current year 1998-99 is estimated at 21320 million sq. mtrs.

(d) Mainly the role of the Textile Ministry is that of a facilitator. But some of the steps aimed at improving the textile sector are listed below:

1. An Expert Committee has been constituted inter-alia, to make recommendations for a new Textile Policy.

2. A Technology Upgradation Fund Scheme is proposed to be launched for implementation in the current Plan period intending to give accent to the post spinning sub-sectors (weaving, processing and garment) by providing an interest incentive to the identified sectors of textile industry.

3. In order to have a coordinated approach to cotton development, a Cotton Technology Mission has been proposed in collaboration with Ministry of Agriculture, aiming to cover in a coordinated fashion different areas like increasing productivity, improving research, marketing and post harvest activities.

4. A task force has been constituted for facilitating induction of Information Technology in the textile sector.

5. Duty structure is constantly being rationalised to promote export and encourage import of technology.

Rehabilitation of Displaced Textile Workers in Maharashtra and Gujarat

2635. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the Minister of TEXTILES be pleased to state:

(a) the steps taken by Government to rehabilitate the workers rendered jobless due to the closure of textile mills in the country, particularly in Gujarat and Maharashtra;

(b) the details of the measures taken or proposed to be taken by Government to make easy the functioning of the textile industry and to provide more facilities to the industry;

(c) whether the Central Government have extended any financial assistance to the State Governments for the purpose;

(d) if so, the details thereof, State-wise;

(e) whether the Government of Gujarat has submitted any request for rehabilitation of the displaced textile workers; and

(f) if so, the action taken by Government in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF TEXTILES (SHRI KASHIRAM RANA). (a) Govenrment has been implementing a Taxtile Workers Rehabilitation Fund Scheme (TWRFS) to provide interim relief to the workers rendered jobless due to partial/permanent closure of mill. The scheme is applicable throughout the country.

(b) the following steps have been taken by the Government:

1. Setting up of an Expert Committe for recommending a new Textile Policy;